The Season's Children's Books

By HILDEGARDE HAWTHORNE.

IV. Books for Story-Loving Children.

I PICKED up "The Adventures of Maya the Bee" (Thomas Seltzer) and glanced through it. That is, my intention was to glance through it and then lay it aside and take up the next book in line. After a while I looked at the clock—two hours had passed and I had read most of the book, seen all the pictures, turned to the end and found out how it had all come out. It is that sort of a book. Maya is a bee, to be sure not a girl, but if you are able to start out with her on her great adventure of seeing the world and then to leave her until you get her safe home after all the amazing things you encounter with her—well. I don't understand it. She fascinated me completely. I don't know whether Waldemar Bonsels has written any other book for children, but at least he has written one so full of charming

From "The Adventures of Maya the Bee." By Waldemar Bonsels. (Thomas Seltzer.)

fancy, of the most acute observation of nature that is but the clearer for its fairy character, that he deserves to become a favorite with thousands of happy children, to whom this one book will give many hours of joy. It has been rendered into exquisite English by Adele Szold Seltzer and illustrated with full pages in color and manifold drawings in pen and ink by Homer Boss. What is more, Arthur Guiterman has translated the many little songs and poems that wander through the tale and has done it delightfully.

It is always a pleasant thing to get hold of a new book of folk tales, and these,

Decoration from "Mighty Mikko: Finnish Folk and Fairy Tales." By Parker Fillmore. (Harcourt, Brace & Co.)

"The Islands of Magic" (Harcourt, Brace & Co.), which Elsie Spicer Eells has collected during a sojourn in the Azores, are full of a fresh spirit. They are retold in the simple and direct manner of the originals, and they have a close relation to the peasant life and beliefs, to their shrewd knowledge of their world, which is yet always kindly, faithful and sincere. The book is quite unusually attractive because of this quality, which has been so successfully retained. One may mention the clever drawings in line by E. L. Brock as an additional attraction.

Parker Fillmore has long made folklore his particular study, and he has written stories for children that bear the test of adult interest too. "Mighty Mikko, Finnish Folk and Fairy Tales" (Harcourt, Brace & Co.), is a fat volume full of treasures gathered by him from ancient Finnish sources and rendered liberally into English. As Mr. Fillmore explains, these stories are linked to other versions appearing in other countries. All the great mass of fairy and fairy-animal lore is so linked. Nevertheless each version is different, is strongly flavored by the temperament and social life from which it springs, and altered by the fancy of the people who have made it theirs. This book is the work of a man who appreciates the wonder and the humor of these tales and who has made them from the original pattern with love and care. There are pictures and decorations by Jan Van Everen.

From "Shakespeare and the Heart of a Child." By Gertrude Slaughter. (Macmillan Co.)

Another collection that is full of originality and the real spirit of the source from which it is taken is "The Russian Garland" (Stokes), edited by Robert Steele, who got the material from a large collection of peasant chap books of all sorts made in Moscow in 1830. Each of the stories here found, and there are seventeen, is full of incident, crowded with perils to the hero, knows witches and spells, talking animals and wise men and women. Princesses and princes are the heroines and the heroes or else the simple son or daughter of a peasant. The interest is always well sustained, the style is straightforward and beautiful. They are truly fit for a child and they make good reading for us all. Colored pictures by J. R. De Rosciszewski add a grace note.

Henry Wisham Lanier has had the excellent idea of gathering together a sheaf of legends and stories about giants, from the oldest days down to our own. Most of the best giants were only fancies, worse luck, but perhaps they have the best of it, for there is hardly a limit to the size they may attain and the mad adventures they meet. While George Auger, the newest and realest giant, is but eight feet four inches tall and though he dresses as a cowboy, he appears to have done nothing more thrilling than to sit before admiring crowds in the sideshow of a circus. "A

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Derelicts Who Live Like Kings

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make a snug berth for themselves in this maelstrom of life.

But, "come one, come all," if they want it, they can all find contentment. These camps of the coast despite the almost savage strain of their work are the most peaceable spots I have found on earth. Men come here to work for a "cure."

Struthers, the man who drives the "War Eagle" here, is a former Royal Flying Corps captain. He had been flying booze for the whiskey ring in Vancouver, made too much money, had a row with his wife and—after a "crash" where he had floated the best part of a night on a log in the Straits of Juan de Fuca—he decided to pull out of the game. Now he is running a launch, towing log booms at the rate of one mile in two hours. A striking contrast in speed in the two lives of this man!

"Reds," the "push" of No. 3 camp, is loud in his praise: "That boy's a wonder. He's all hell let loose when it comes to machinery. Makes the old 'War Eagle' run as sweet as a watch. Yeah! Taking it easy out here in the woods, . . gettin' a line on himself."

The "push" shook his head and smiled warmly: "Yeah! An' I hear his girl's gonna come back to him. That's fine, ain't it?"

I came up to No. 3 camp one night on the "Countess" (she was burned to her plimsoll two days ago and sank under Jakko, her Australian skipper, who swam to shore and crawled up the banks, laughing! A prospector sat in her cockpit, an Irishman with pale, washed out, blue eyes. And, as he talked, his gaze searched the mountains, peaks like spear points of metal, molten, violet, . . almost transparent in the golden powder of sunset.

"Grub stake," explained this seeker for gold, "I've been digging holes in the caribou country; . . ran out of chuck. . . ."

He pulled a pill box out of his pocket; a pinch of brass colored blobs lay at its bottom: "Got that out of three pans!"

The man beside me grunted excitedly and the Irishman shook his gray head: "Yep! an' I'm going in there next spring; . . going to hit it this time;"

The Chinaman sneered and voiced his version of all human hope. "One diollah to-day, . . fifty diollah to-morrow?"

But the prospector had removed himself from our presence. Somewhere in that tumbled maze on the skyline he was mounting a trail, revisiting some crystal clear stream; and with us in the boat there remained but his time weary battered exterior. This was a long time ago, and I wondered that night how he would fare in the logging camps during the winter, whether he would manage to lay by enough to purchase his "grub stake," and if the next spring would see him in the hills that he loved, following his dreams, in the Caribou country. . . .

Two hours later I had ceased to fear for this wanderer. I knew he had come into heaven! Picture this scene:

Sunset, like flames, lapping the rim of a great bowl of blue mountains; a dark plaque of lake water, and the houseboats of No. 3 camp—a tiny cluster of yellow at the foot of a sheer wall of green forest. the cookhouse, &c., with its French range, in an immaculate galley. . . . And cookie! Cookie, in his little white suit, waving his arms, jumping here, jumping there, a contortion of acrobat and deft handed juggler. The aroma of roasting fresh meat. . . .

Dinner Is Staggering Feast

In heavy calked boots, tattered slacks, mackinaws or sweaters of Siwash, the loggers pile in from the woods, red faced, eager, hungry as wolves from their work in the crisp mountain air. They sling their legs under the tables. . . .

Now, watch 'em come! Flunkies! (And "flunkies" they call 'em.) Flunkies, white-suited, swift-footed, never at rest! Flunkies, rustling food for the gods. Great bowls of fragrant cerise colored soup, made from the okanogan tomato, salmon, fresh from the sea!—"hefty" big roasts of beef and of pork, succulent and shining with crackling, potatoes, fresh beans, corn on the cob, carrots *in butter!* . . . salads crisp, cold and green, steaming kettles of coffee and tea, puddings of every description, pies, doughnuts, pastries, . . . crackers and cheese!

And the whole was wolfed in ten minutes!

Talking is a crime during meals! Like whistling in church. No wonder I sat there dumfounded; apart from the colorful scene, the races and types of the men, apart from the staggering size of this feast—there was the excellent cooking! Salmon cutlets of a perfection which never before had bewitched my palate! I had barely finished the fourth of such blessings when the loggers began to get up and go. They walked stiffly—as men do who rest momentarily after a day of hard labor—but they also moved with a languorous ease of men who have dined to their liking. And, as each passed out of the door, he first thrust his fist into a box nailed to its portals . . . to pull out a toothpick. And thus the long string of men, each with that vile little sliver of wood sticking out of his face, moved into the bunkhouses. From one came the pulsing of music; a Wop made his accordion sob "Sole Mio." . . .

Cookie came to my side to ask would I like "some more Java?"

"Loggers," said cookie, after listening patiently while I sang his praise; "loggers are very perticiler!" According to cookie, should he once fail to give them "hotcakes" for breakfast they would howl for his scalp. Cooks, he claims, last on the average but two months at a camp—after that the men get them fired. He declares these camps of the coast "feed" the best in the world; and cookie should know—before the Boer War he had been a telegraph operator on the Zulu-African spoor wagon (Cape Railroad). His wanderings, traced in red on a grammar school "globe," would make it look as if some child had been drawing rings on the thing!

Cookie said that this place was heaven! The coast logger works an eight hour day; breakfasts at 7, knocks off at 11:30 to come in for hot lunch, and returns to the woods one hour and a half later; at 5 he quits for the day, and at 5:30 he does what I have just been describing. He has a steel bed, soft mattress, clean blankets and sheets, which are changed once a week! He has shower baths—with hot and cold water—and a big drying room, where he can hang his wet clothes so they shall be dry in the morning. And just as the Cookie has flunkies to serve meals, do kitchen police and wash dishes, so the logger has his "bull cook," a menial who cleans up the bunkhouses, straightens things out and cuts the wood for the big Comox stoves.

The bull cook gets his name from the lowest laborer in the old days of the bull camps, and the sound of this name brought a frown among the wrinkles of Cookie:

"Those were the tough camps! A man hardly dared take off his pants for fear some one would swipe 'em!"

He spoke of the old camps in the pine country, of the days when men set forth in the darkness to sweat logs across snow under torchlight, do four hours work before dawn and then sit down to a breakfast enlivened by neither coffee, sugar nor milk. The fierce days of a "drive," when men neither rested nor ate until their logs had reached the deep water. Bull camps, where men toiled for seventeen hours each day, and, in dripping wet clothes had crawled into the "muzzle loading" bunks to snatch a few hours' surcease from this world, sleeping, one on top of another, heads in, feet out, as though in the pigeon holes of a desk—the top row sweltering in a feverish stench and the lowest freezing to death.

And here, with three servants, a cozy cubicle all of his own and $160 a month! Small wonder Cookie looks upon it as heaven!

The Man Who Tried to Forget

But I know a man to whom it is hell! To whom all the beauty of these hills and great valleys, the stillness and peace of this land are but torment. He came here to seek a refuge in life, to get away from the world. Not because he hated that world—rather, he loved it. But he had lost his place there, fallen from a great height. He wants to forget that he had ever been such a man—and he can't!

He is known as the "Doc." Hundreds of old timers, slews of men, who would be unable to distinguish between a scalpel and a catheter, are called "Doc" out here; it's the pet sobriquet of the wilds. But this man tried to disown it; he fought to be called anything rather than that, but an accident fastened it to him forever.

A high rigger cut himself down. When picked up he was but a ragbag of bones. The logging crew were discussing whether it wouldn't be kindness to put him out of his misery. Then, up the hill climbed the timekeeper.

In the settlement, down by the sea, the real doctor gave his opinion, the high rigger had just been removed from the stretcher: "He will live," said this hospital man, "but it's a damn lucky thing you had a doctor right here on the spot."

The loggers looked at each other. "Doctor? We ain't got no doctor! This feller here . . . them things on his legs. . . and the sewing him up . . . that stuff was done by our timekeeper.

"Great God! Do you mean to tell me——" but here the doctor suddenly bit down on his lip. "Well, anyway," he assured the loggers, "this man will get well."

Back in his office he sat there staring long at the wall. His diploma was framed over his desk. He pronounced the Latin words sadly: ". . . *Universitas*. . . . Poor devil! Poor devil!"

The matron swished past the door, and the doctor called out: "They have some queer customers out here in the wilds, haven't they, Matron?"

"Yes, Doctor," came the soft voice, "all kinds of men come to these parts."